



MUSHROOM MAGIC

did you know...

Turkey Tail (shown here) boosted immune function in women with breast cancer, according to a recent study.

Feel amazing from the inside out with medicinal mushrooms **By Michele Burkliund, ND**

Medicinal mushrooms have a profound healing power, and were used thousands of years ago by the Greeks, Egyptians, and Chinese as a means to promote longevity. These beneficial fungi offer a vast range of potentially therapeutic uses including enhancing immunity, improving cardiovascular health, promoting detoxification, boosting mood, improving digestion, stimulating memory, and nourishing the body.

What makes these "magic" mushrooms so unique? For one thing, fungi and humans are actually more closely related biologically than fungi and plants.

Perhaps that's why mushrooms make us feel so good! Here's a quick guide to a few of our favorites:

CHAGA

(*Inonotus obliquus*): Often referred to as the "king of medicinal mushrooms," chaga is hailed as a superfood because of its powerful ability

to support the immune system with beneficial constituents such as beta glucans, melanin, betulinic acid, and superoxide dismutase. Chaga's micronutrients have also been proven to exhibit anti-aging properties that offer cellular protection against DNA damage. This mushroom is found growing on birch trees in forests in the northern hemisphere. Infuse it into a tea with cinnamon and vanilla, or take it as a tincture or in capsule form.

Use it for: Fighting colds and flu; supporting the immune system; managing stress; nourishing skin and hair; rejuvenating the body.

Looking for enhanced immune support? Combine chaga with turkey tail mushroom for a powerful synergistic response.

CORDYCEPS

(*Cordyceps sinensis*): For thousands of years, cordyceps has been used in Tibetan, Chinese, and Ayurvedic medicine to promote vitality. This hardy

mushroom is found in the mountainous regions of the Himalayas, where it thrives in a low-oxygen environment. Its ability to flourish in even the harshest conditions provides cordyceps with unique properties to support endurance training and enhance oxygen capacity. A pilot study published in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* found that cordyceps enhances exercise and contributes to overall wellness in healthy people between the ages of 50 and 75. Mix these tasty mushrooms into chicken soup, use them as a garnish for salads, or take in capsule form.

Use it for: Enhancing athletic performance and endurance; supporting the body's ability to uptake oxygen; boosting energy and vitality; supporting the liver and kidneys; promoting healthy sexual function.

SHIITAKE

(*Lentinus edodes*): Rich in nutrients, protein, flavor, and

medicinal properties, this mushroom has been a prized food in Asia for many years. It has been studied for its ability to lower cholesterol, support immune function, fight viruses, and promote a healthy cardiovascular system. Shiitake mushrooms are also part of a proprietary Japanese mushroom extract called AHCC—or active hexose correlated compound—which has been shown to enhance immunity and increase the activity of natural killer cells. Found in most grocery stores across North America, these tasty mushrooms can be a delicious addition to a vegetable stir-fry or sautéed with garlic to enhance their rich, smoky flavor.

Use it for: Supporting cardiovascular health; promoting overall immune function; enhancing healthy liver function.

TURKEY TAIL

(*Trametes versicolor*): This is one of the most common mushrooms

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inside scoop

found in North America, and also the most studied for its impressive immune-stimulating properties. You won't be able to miss these beauties where they sprout from dead trees. Their rich hues of brown, orange, maroon, green, and blue all resemble a turkey's feathers. A molecule called PSK is unique to this mushroom and provides much of its potent immune-stimulating properties. A recent study conducted by Bastyr University and the University of Minnesota along with the NIH found that turkey tail dramatically boosted the overall immune function of women with stages I-III breast cancer. Make a delicious turkey tail tea, or

take it as a capsule or tincture. **Use it for:** Optimizing immune function; fighting viral infections; reducing inflammation in the body. Want a comprehensive immune-building approach? Try Stamets 7 by Host Defense Mushrooms, which combines seven medicinal mushrooms for maintaining peak health.

LION'S MANE

(*Hericium erinaceus*): This mushroom is best known for its neuroprotective effects, which can help support memory, improve cognition, and balance mood. In fact, a 2009 double-blind, placebo-controlled study that was

published in the *Journal of Phytotherapy Research* found that subjects who took this mushroom performed significantly better than those given the placebo in cognitive function tests. It can be easily identified by its Latin name, which means "hedgehog" due to its white color and

cascading teeth-like spines. **Use it for:** Nerve regeneration; mood support and balancing; improving memory; enhancing concentration.

Want a super brain boost? Combine brain-supporting herbs such as gotu kola, bacopa, and rosemary with lion's mane mushrooms.



Michelle Burkland, ND, is a practicing physician specializing in holistic health and preventive medicine. When she's not blogging, she's seeing patients, taking photographs, writing books, traveling, and speaking around the globe. Visit healthyofcourse.com.



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GARBAGE OUT

Hit the "refresh" button on your body and mind with a detoxifying cleanse

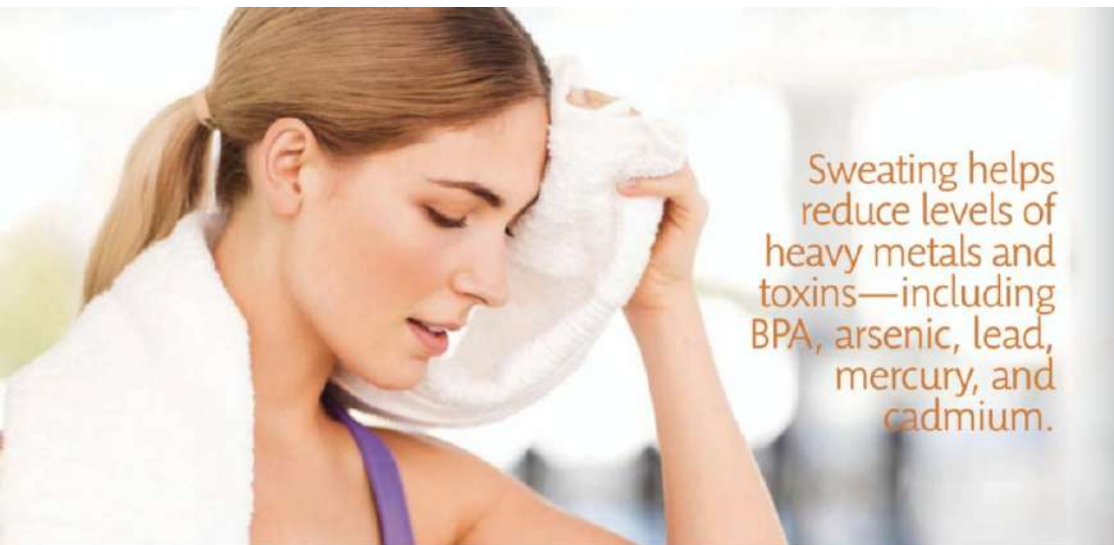
By MICHELE BURKLUND, ND

As summer approaches, it's the perfect time to cleanse, nourish, and feel radiant from the inside out. The body does an amazing job of detoxifying itself, but the amount of toxins we're exposed to on a daily basis has dramatically increased in our ever-more-plastic world—meaning that sometimes, your body might need a little help getting rid of all the garbage. Here are 10 simple ways to support your main detoxification pathways and put the spring back into your step.

1 Cleanse with Chlorella

This blue-green alga has clearly stood the test of time, with fossils indicating that it's been around at least 530 million years. Its single-celled structure and high content of chlorophyll give it unique abilities to nourish the body while also absorbing very small particles. More than just a superfood, chlorella can bind heavy metals, toxins, and pesticides and carry them out of the body. It can be taken in a capsule form or mixed into a smoothie (throw in a little cilantro for an added detoxifying effect).





Sweating helps reduce levels of heavy metals and toxins—including BPA, arsenic, lead, mercury, and cadmium.

2 Nourish Your Liver with Milk Thistle

This well-known plant has been used for more than 2,000 years to cleanse and support the body. Its active substance is called silymarin, which is found in the seeds. Studies have shown that milk thistle not only supports the liver, but also rejuvenates it. It's a potent antioxidant, has anti-inflammatory properties, and has been proven to repair and grow new liver cells. The liver has hundreds of jobs to perform, and one very important duty is to remove toxins and waste from the blood. Adding milk thistle to your supplement regimen helps support the cleansing process while giving you the added benefit of glowing skin.



3 Get Glowing with Glutathione

This intriguing molecule is made of three amino acids—cysteine, glycine, and glutamine—along with a sulfur group that enables it to bind to free radicals and toxins. A potent antioxidant produced by the body to aid in the liver detoxification process, glutathione can become depleted due to an overwhelming toxic burden. A supplement called N-acetylcysteine (NAC) is an amino acid precursor that can stimulate glutathione synthesis and support cleansing.



4 Rebalance with Probiotics

A healthy gut plays a vital function in eliminating waste, optimizing nutrients, balancing immune function, and improving mood. *The Journal of Nature Reviews Immunology* published a study in 2009 that revealed an association between disturbances in gut flora and impaired immune response. So how do you keep your body's good bacteria in balance? Eat probiotic-rich foods such as yogurt, kefir, miso, and other fermented foods. And take a high-quality probiotic that contains a range of strains to help restore gut health.

5 Move Your Lymph

A key component of immune health, the lymphatic system is a network of 600 nodes and glands that help remove toxins and waste. Common lymph-loving herbs include red clover, cleavers, burdock root, queen's root, and calendula. Dry skin brushing can also help stimulate the lymphatic system while also improving circulation and removing dead skin cells. Brush your skin in an upward circular motion, beginning at your feet before moving to your torso, and from your hands to your chest—the same direction that your lymph flows.



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6 Sweat It Out

Eliminating toxins through the skin is a gentle, yet very effective, approach to easing the burden on your kidneys and liver. In fact, a 2011 study published in *Archives of Environmental and Contamination Toxicology* revealed that sweating helps reduce levels of heavy metals and toxins—including BPA, arsenic, lead, mercury, and cadmium—from the body. Increase your sweat by exercising, warming up in an infrared sauna, or taking a bath.

7 Listen to Your Body

Have you noticed that certain foods make you feel tired and bloated, or make your skin break out? Now is the time to eliminate them from your diet and give your digestive system a needed break.

Have you ever tracked your sleep? Creating a sleep diary will help you hone in on what time and how much sleep helps you feel your best. Each morning, document the number of hours you slept, the quality of your sleep, and whether you woke up feeling refreshed or groggy. Optimize your sleep by going to bed at the same time each night and creating a relaxing bedtime ritual. For some people, eliminating caffeine after 10 a.m. also helps.

8 Get Back to Nature

Being closer to the earth is a simple way to feel grounded and more relaxed. Think you don't have the time? A study published in the *Journal of Psychological Science* in 2008 showed that people who were exposed to

natural environments for 50 minutes had increased focus and directed attention afterward. Perhaps taking time to relax the mind makes you even more productive. Want to really get in touch with nature? Go barefoot!

9 Feast on Detoxifying Foods

It's no secret that food is the best medicine, and the delicious combinations are endless. Artichoke is a gorgeous and tasty veggie that contains a phytonutrient called cynarin, which stimulates the production of bile and hence, improves digestion. Often called a superfood, artichokes are loaded with antioxidants (including liver-supportive silymarin), packed with

vitamin C, and rich in fiber to keep the body regular. Focus on liver-loving veggies such as artichoke, broccoli, onions, beets, and cabbage. Infuse extra detox-supporting flavor to your meals with garlic, cilantro, parsley, cinnamon, basil, and turmeric. Maintain regularity by drinking water throughout the day and eating other fiber-rich foods such as apples, almonds, peas, and lentils.

10 Take a Break from Technology

Can you think of the last time you turned off your cell phone or put away your computer for an entire day? Set a time each day (or week) to unplug and engage in a relaxing activity to melt away the stress. Take a bath infused with lavender,

meditate, read a book, or create art to renew your mind and revive your senses.

If going cold turkey from technology isn't an option, try ending your computer time two hours before bed. Artificial computer light can reduce your body's levels of melatonin, which is an important hormone for sleep. A trial published in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism* revealed that individuals exposed to room light compared to dim light before bedtime shortened their melatonin duration by 90 minutes. These findings show that electrical lighting can have a profound effect on well-being, and that simple changes can make a huge difference in how you sleep and feel.

AYURVEDA FOR CLEANSING AND CHRONIC CONSTIPATION

Chronic constipation? There's no need to be embarrassed. There are an estimated 2.5 million doctor's visits per year in the U.S. related to constipation, and laxatives are among the top-selling over-the-counter drugs in the country. While it's not something people like to talk about, chronic constipation is clearly a widespread problem for many. In relation to detoxification, colon health and regular bowel movements play a vital role in the body's complex elimination process.

Signs of chronic constipation include having fewer than three bowel movements a week, experiencing difficulty passing stools or passing hard, lumpy stools, and having abdominal discomfort and bloating.

There are many natural approaches and medicines that work to relieve chronic constipation, but one stands out from the crowd—triphala. According to Julie McIntyre, a medical herbalist in Silver City, N.M., this Ayurvedic herb, which is actually a combination of three herbs, is particularly effective for treating chronic constipation, as well as fluctuating bouts of constipation and diarrhea. Triphala is rich in vitamin C and other nutrients, and is considered a rejuvenating herb with detoxifying qualities in Indian medicine.

For chronic constipation, triphala moistens and tones the colon, helping to restore it to health. You may need to adjust the dosage, but start with 500 mg two to three times daily. Reduce the dose to 250 mg per day once you experience relief. You can take triphala indefinitely at this lower dosage. The most common side effects are loose or runny stools and stomach cramping. Reduce your dose or stop taking it if this happens. —Nicole Brechka



Michèle Burkland, NMD, graduated from the prestigious Bastyr University in Seattle. "I have no doubt that the power of natural healing can enhance anyone's life at whatever stage or age they are," says Burkland, who specializes in helping neurological patients. Visit healthy-fashionista.com to learn more about Burkland and read her entertaining and informative blogs.

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